

Share your story

For nearly two hundred years, the Academy of Natural Sciences has inspired imaginations, launched careers, deepened our connection to nature, and even changed lives. Now, the Academy needs your stories to preserve its impact for future generations.

Amplifying the impact of the Academy in our communities by sharing our stories does the following:

- A) Keeps this top of mind, so it can't quietly fade from conversation.
- B) Shows the true scale of impact: One person's account is easy to dismiss, but hundreds of firsthand stories aren't.
- C) Reaches people who can act. Leaders and decision-makers respond to real voices.

The goal of this document is to give you tools and guidance that will boost your story's impact.

Why is the Academy special to you?

Stories have the power to convey emotion, experience, and impact in ways that direct statements can't. Whether your story involves a special visit, professional affiliation, or a lifetime of memories, what's important is that it's unique to you.

Five tips for sharpening your story's impact:

1. **Lead with a summary statement across written or spoken formats.** This helps to maintain attention, set expectations, and shape a memorable take-away. If you feel stuck, try starting with, *"The Academy matters to me because..."*
2. **Choose a few key messages that you want your audience to remember.** Like a summary statement, organizing your story into key messages or themes can help your audience better understand your experience — especially if you have many memories to share. For example, maybe the Academy shaped 1) an irreplaceable childhood experience, 2) career opportunities, and 3) ongoing community connections. If someone reading or listening to your story retold it to others, what would you want them to say?
3. **Speak from your heart, using real examples.** Maya Angelou said, *"People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."* Specific, human experiences are incredibly memorable, and sharing them is one of the most powerful ways we have to influence opinion. Made a bug hat? Felt your heart open up with the butterflies? Learned pollinator tips you now use in your garden? Met a real sloth, or felt stunned by the feathers of an ancient 'Ice Dino'? Share what matters to you, and why.
4. **Consider length and format.**

- If calling into a **radio show or podcast**, comments can be around 20 seconds, leaving time only for a brief summary of your reflections. If possible, try to rehearse in advance to make sure your message is clear and to the point.
 - **Social media** offers a range of opportunities depending on your style and comfort level, including video, written posts, photos, carousels, and mixed media. Try a few, or comment on existing posts from news outlets to start a conversation. Tagging the museum itself, our campaign (save-the-academy), and specific decision-makers will help to expand your reach.
 - **Letters to decision-makers** can involve longer written content, and include artwork if you like. If you're writing with children, consider including their messages and drawings too.
 - **Letters to a newspaper editor** should be 150 words or less, include your contact details, and focus on a clear, timely, and focused message.
5. **Make it your own.** There are many ways to share your thoughts, beyond those mentioned here. While these tips are meant to help, your story is yours to shape. However you choose to share your story about the Academy's impact, know that your experience will forever be a part of its story, too.

See other actions you can take on our [website](#), as well as contact details for key decision-makers. If you need support, [contact us](#).

Brought to you by the Save The Academy Coalition
save-the-academy.org
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